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# The Politics and Governance of Non-Traditional Security

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The international security literature has recently observed the growing “securitization” of issues outside the traditional concern with interstate military conflict. However, this literature offers only limited explanations of this tendency, and largely neglects to explain how the new security issues are actually governed in practice, despite apparent “securitization” leading to divergent outcomes across time and space. We argue that the rise of non-traditional security should be conceptualized not simply as the discursive identification of new threats but as part of a deep-seated historical transformation in the scale of state institutions and activities, notably the rise of regulatory forms of statehood and the relativization of scales of governance. The most salient feature of the politics of non-traditional security lies in key actors’ efforts to rescale the governance of particular issues from the national level to a variety of new spatial and territorial arenas and, in so doing, transform state apparatuses. The governance that actually emerges in practice can be understood as an outcome of conflicts between these actors and those resisting their rescaling attempts. The argument is illustrated with a case study of environmental security governance in Southeast Asia.

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### **Introduction**

In recent decades, “non-traditional” security (NTS) challenges increasingly occupied scholars, security practitioners and ordinary people around the world, a trend reinforced by 9/11 and other high-profile terrorist attacks (see White House 2002; UN 2004). Traditionally, security threats were viewed through the prism of state survival and conceived mainly in terms of *inter*-state military conflict. More recently, security has come to also be associated with a wide-range of non-traditional, mostly *trans*-national issues, including terrorism, environmental degradation and climate change, infectious disease, transnational crime, and illegal migration.<sup>1</sup> These are thought to traverse national borders or operate beyond the scope of conventional state action; they are not necessarily seen to directly threaten the state’s very existence, but challenge its real or perceived capacity to protect affected populations. These developments raise two interrelated questions. First, what explains the current prominence of NTS issues on the security agendas of governments and international organizations? Second, what factors shape the manner in which NTS issues are understood and managed in practice? The first question is significant because many of the issues to which NTS refers are not new but have recently come to be seen and managed differently. The second is significant because, while traditional security concerns reify the organization of world politics along

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<sup>1</sup> *Contra* Buzan and Hansen (2009), “non-traditional” refers here to security issues outside a traditional concern for military conflict and state survival, rather than to the analytical approach used to examine these issues.

state borders, NTS issues tend to traverse these. Therefore, important questions, such as who manages these problems and how, are not necessarily self-understood and settled.

The existing literature on NTS has pursued alternative questions, and consequently offers only limited answers to these questions. The field has predominantly been concerned with exploring or challenging “securitization,” the discursive, political process whereby new threats to security are identified (Buzan et al. 1998). This approach, pioneered by the “Copenhagen school” of security studies, does not see NTS politics as a fundamentally new phenomenon that demands explanation, but rather as the lengthening of a “laundry list” of security concerns, and thus largely neglects our first question. Focusing on discursive securitization also leads Copenhagen scholars to neglect to explain how NTS issues are subsequently governed, despite the fact that very different governance arrangements have arisen to tackle ostensibly similarly securitized problems. By focusing on the expansion of the “field” of security professionals, the “Paris school” offers a more promising explanation of the widening of the security agenda and security governance (CASE Collective 2006). However, its neglect of broader socio-political and economic dynamics leads it to over-privilege the agency of this narrow set of agencies.

We argue that the rise of NTS reflects a more fundamental transformation: in short, security is becoming “non-traditional” because states are also becoming “non-traditional.” Growing concern with NTS both reflects and facilitates the contested and uneven disaggregation of national statehood and the rise of devolved and regulatory forms of statehood, through which the national scale of governance has been relativized and now competes with other scales. The salient feature of the politics of NTS is the attempt to rescale security’s spaces, discourses and management from the national level to a range of new spatial, political and/or institutional arenas, in alignment with the interests, strategies and ideologies of key actors, thereby further transforming state apparatuses. The governance

arrangements that emerge in practice reflect the conflicts between these actors and those resisting their rescaling efforts. This is emphatically not to say that the emergence of NTS issues has led to states becoming less important sites of security policy and regulation, or that states are withering away. Rather, it is to highlight that identifying particular issues as “non-traditional” and hence not easily contained within national borders has permitted their governance to be shifted beyond the national political arena and, in some cases, outside the established institutions of national government into the hands of actors – often experts in particular areas – who are not politically and popularly accountable. The identification of these issues as matters of security – existentially dangerous, or potentially so – serves to rationalize and legitimize this rescaling process. The result is an expansion of the breadth and depth of the regulatory state and of administrative forms of power.

This article proceeds as follows. The first section briefly examines the strengths and limitations of current critical approaches for examining security’s expansion, arguing that they largely neglect or offer only limited answers to our questions. The following section advances our own analysis of the rise of NTS and its governance. It locates these phenomena as part of historically-specific processes of state transformation associated with changes in the global political economy, notably the dismantling of the Keynesian-welfarist nation-state and the emergence of competing scales of governance and associated spatial imaginaries. Struggles over the meaning of security and its governance are conceptualized as part of broader conflicts over the spatial organization of political rule, with governance outcomes contingent upon the power and strategies of competing coalitions of actors, institutions and ideologies. The final section illustrates the argument through a case study of environmental security governance in Southeast Asia, where attempts to establish the complex, multi-level governance of forest fires have been constrained by powerful societal interests.

### **Non-Traditional Security: Current Approaches**

The widely observed and dramatic widening and deepening of the international security agenda has prompted much scholarly debate and theory-building since the 1980s. This section briefly surveys the main approaches and how they explain the rise of NTS and its governance, focusing in particular on the Copenhagen School and related approaches. While they may successfully describe the rhetorical broadening of the security agenda to encompass NTS issues, these approaches tend to neglect the wider historical processes of political, social and economic transformation of which this expansion forms part, and which help explain and contextualize it. Relatedly, by adopting an overly static view of states and a relatively narrow view of politics, they also neglect to explore how new security issues are governed in practice in different contexts.

One of the main fault-lines in contemporary security studies is between those who see “(in)security” as an objective condition and those who emphasize its social construction. Early debates largely revolved around whether the notion of “security” should be broadened at all (Ullman 1983; Jahn et al. 1987; Walt 1991; Booth 1991). Traditional realists tended to argue that widening the security agenda risked making both scholarship and state policy incoherent. Others saw the broadening of security as potentially emancipatory, allowing its focus to shift from the state to “human security” (Booth 1991). Ultimately the “wideners-deepeners” prevailed and the study of NTS is now firmly ensconced within security studies (Buzan and Hansen 2009:44). Those who view security as an objective phenomenon now use a broadly “realist” ontology to explain the rise of NTS. For them, it simply reflects post-Cold War changes in the threat environment, particularly globalization’s impact in creating new risks, threats and vulnerabilities for states and people, to which governments must now respond (Brown 2003; Dupont 2001).

The main drawback of this scholarship is that many issues depicted as “new” security concerns are not new at all; rather, they have recently come to be viewed – and managed – differently. For example, the 1918-19 Spanish Flu, which killed around 50 million people worldwide, was at the time viewed as part of the general misery of the Great War and its aftermath. The first book dedicated to it was only published in the mid-1970s. Today, however, the Spanish Flu is constantly invoked by public health practitioners and policymakers to justify intrusive “pandemic preparedness” measures to prevent a similar catastrophe (Wraith and Stephenson 2009).

More promising, then, is scholarship that recognizes the socially constructed nature of security. From this perspective, security threats are not objectively given but instead reflect the development of intersubjectively shared understandings, in which some thing is discursively framed as posing an existential threat to some valued referent object. This “securitization” process has been a guiding framework for a large body of constructivist and poststructuralist scholarship which analyzes and problematizes the concept of security (CASE Collective 2006). Through their focus on the creative agency of policy elites, they offer a more compelling explanation of how new issues are added to the security agenda. However, despite their sophisticated and significant contribution to security studies, including to our argument, these approaches do not fully address our questions. Because the scope of this article precludes thorough examination of all of these approaches, we organize our discussion around arguably the most influential one – the Copenhagen School’s (CS) securitization theory (Buzan et al. 1998). Much recent literature on security’s expansion has developed in relation to this, whether offering refinement or criticism. As we evaluate the CS, we draw on relevant insights from other critical approaches, but also explain why these, too, inadequately address the questions we investigate.

### *The Copenhagen School and Its Critics*

The CS's influential intervention has played a crucial role in rejuvenating security studies. Nevertheless, the agenda it set and the analytical tools it deploys tell us only a limited amount about the securitization of NTS. Copenhagen scholars have identified and described *how* problems become security issues, focusing on changes in the *discourse* of security. However, given this limited *problematique*, they do not attempt to account for *why* this process is happening or how security issues are *governed*. This circumscribes what their approach tells us about the rise of NTS and its implications.

The CS's major conceptual contribution is the notion of "securitization." It is through inventing this concept that debate over whether the international security agenda should be broadened was "'solved'... by fixing *form*: whenever something took the form of the particular speech act of securitization, with a securitizing actor claiming an existential threat to a valued referent object in order to make the audience tolerate extraordinary measures that otherwise would not have been acceptable, this was a case of securitization" (Wæver 2011:469; emphasis in original). In line with the broader constructivist turn in International Relations, Copenhagen scholars rightly argued that the broadening security agenda did not simply reflect objective shifts in the threat environment but was instead being socially constructed.

Their choice of how to theorize this construction has profoundly shaped their subsequent *problematique* and research agenda. For them, the securitization process is fundamentally discursive: drawing on language theorist J.L. Austin, Wæver (1995) defines securitization as a "speech act." Whether the speech act succeeds in securitizing a given issue depends on certain facilitating conditions, including the speaker's requirement to follow "the grammar of security," the nature of the relationship between speaker and audience, and the features of the alleged threat (Buzan et al. 1998:33). When successful, the speaker transforms



the issue into a matter of “security,” placing it at the top of the political agenda and legitimizing the use of extraordinary resources and exceptional measures to tackle the “threat,” including the suspension of the normal rules and procedures of political life. This emphasis on the speech act has focused subsequent analytical attention on the “productive moment... of securitization” (Wæver 2011:468) – describing the discursive process through which new issues become intersubjectively understood as matters of security. Although this focus has generated many interesting studies, it also limits the CS’s scope of inquiry in important ways that constrain what it can tell us about the rise of NTS and its implications for security practice and governance.

Firstly, as many critics argue, the “speech act” theory of securitization wrongly emphasizes utterances at the expense of other important dimensions of securitization, such as images, unstated sentiments, physical action and security practices (Williams 2003; Balzacq 2005; Huysmans 2006; Stritzel 2007; McDonald 2008). A related point, though, often missed by these critics, is that emphasizing discourse without reference to material context also presents “securitization” as a timeless, generic process, as applicable to the Soviet Union during the Cold War as to HIV/AIDS today.<sup>2</sup> The only difference is that NTS issues appear to have become more important than before. Explaining *why* is largely outside of the CS’s research agenda, and there is little within its analytical toolbox that could be used to explore this question.

Secondly, as poststructuralist and Paris School critics argue, the CS’s definition of securitization excludes a great deal of contemporary security practice. The CS contends that to retain conceptual coherence, the notion of “security” can only apply to those issues identified or constructed as constituting existential danger to something else. But the majority

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<sup>2</sup> Some poststructuralist definitions of discourse may encompass the material or institutional contexts in which frameworks of meaning are embedded. In highlighting the limitations of “discursive” approaches we refer more narrowly to the constructivist use of “discourse” to denote speech-acts.

of “new” NTS issues are not actually governed as if they are urgent existential threats but rather as *potentially* existential dangers or *risks*. Risk and risk management have a long history, in financial and insurance services, for example. However, as Beck (1999) argues, recently, policymakers and ordinary people, particularly in the West, have become preoccupied with new kinds of risk. Such risks – for example, climate change, global pandemics, or terrorists using weapons of mass destruction – have a low probability of occurring, but their consequences are seen as potentially catastrophic, defying conventional forms of management, insurance and compensation. Although these risks refer to potentially existential dangers, their management rarely resembles the politics of mass mobilization and “extraordinary measures” typically associated with more traditional securitizations. Instead, we see the development of enhanced systems of detection and management, underpinned by various forms of technical, managerial and scientific expertise, which is often essential to know the problem even exists, as in the case of climate science.

Consequently, securitizing NTS issues does not necessarily involve legitimizing or taking exceptional measures. Instead, as some critics note, it often involves extending routine practices from one area of government/governance to another, or the bureaucratization of governance, neither of which requires the assent of an identifiable audience, as the “speech act” theory supposes (Balzacq 2008) or a break with politics as usual (Stritzel 2007:367). In some cases, the policy tools themselves transform the threat’s image and hence security policy: governance thus precedes or even supersedes public discourse (Balzacq 2008:77; Huysmans 2006:10-11), as, for example, in the case of the extension of existing forms of surveillance and policing to civil aviation after 9-11 (Aradau and van Munster 2007).

Wæver (2011:474) concedes that the rise of such practices “represent[s] a serious challenge to securitization theory.” His preference, however, is to retain a narrow definition of securitization, even if the “utility and power” of “the theoretical model contracts,” leaving

others to theorize risk management as a distinct phenomenon. Yet, the line between securitization and risk management Wæver is defending is hard to draw, even from within the CS's model. The 2001 invasion of Afghanistan demonstrates that even when exceptional powers of war-making are sought, they are often justified with reference to managing or eliminating risks, such as future terrorist attacks orchestrated from within Afghanistan's borders. Indeed, military intervention was only the first step in a longer-term process of "state-building," involving a wide range of governance actors.

This neglect of security practice relates to our third critique, the CS's inattention to explaining security governance. By "governance" we refer to a wide range of activities, performed by a diverse range of public and private actors, which include defining the nature and sources of security problems, devising plans and policies to ameliorate them, engaging in the actual management of these issues, and auditing the performance of security practitioners. These issues appear connected with, but are marginal to, the CS's research agenda. They are implicitly interested in the question of "*what difference does securitization make[?]*" because "it is the effects that securitization has that make it attractive (or not) for various actors to pursue" (Wæver 2011:476; emphasis in original). However, Copenhagen scholars appear to believe that securitization *co-constructs* threats, referent objects and means simultaneously; that is, that security governance is discursively generated as part of the "speech act" (Buzan et al. 1998:26). Successful securitizations enable extraordinary measures. Beyond this, Copenhagen scholars have paid little attention to what governance arrangements – if any – actually emerge.

In practice, however, governance changes do not automatically accompany discursive changes, nor do urgent or exceptional measures, particularly in the case of risk management. For example, in Southeast Asia, the World Health Organization (WHO) has discursively securitized infectious diseases, and regional governments now regularly refer to them as

threats to their security; yet, in practice, little concerted action has ensued (Caballero-Anthony 2008). By focusing on the “productive moment” of securitization, the CS has both neglected to explore such gaps between security discourse and actual governance and to develop any theoretical apparatus capable of explaining the particular forms that security governance takes (Jones 2011). It may quite reasonably be argued that the issue of governance is deliberately excluded from the parsimonious “securitization” model. But this is a significant limitation for scholars of security and of NTS in particular, because very different modes of governance have emerged to deal with apparently similar issues in different areas and regions, at different times, and with varying effects.

One group of scholars that has addressed security governance more directly is the “Paris School” (CASE Collective 2006). They emphasize the role of professional networks of security agencies that attempt to shape the “truth” about threats and risks through their positions as experts and their actual capacity to create and govern borders, and to manage and define threats (CASE Collective 2006:457). Bigo (2001), for example, demonstrates how internal and external security are increasingly conflated through the extension of internal policing practices beyond state borders and the domestic deployment of the military. This focus on the practices of security professionals means that the Paris School has, unlike the CS, explored the relationship between the expansion of the security agenda and the way in which security is governed. Security’s expansion is explained by the increasing integration of the various agencies concerned with disparate areas of governance into a single “field,” resulting in the differences between threats disappearing and the placing of all security issues onto a continuum of traditional and NTS issues (CASE Collective 2006:459). This integration also helps explain the form that governance takes. Paris scholars argue that the security field is not fixed and the location of agents and their influence is shaped by the configuration of context, the nature of the issue at stake and the power struggles between

professionals (Balzacq 2005). Security is thus theorized in terms of the real practices of state apparatuses, not simply political elites' speech acts. It is less important to know what security "means" than how it is used to shape and govern society. Hence, the issues of what security is and how it is practiced are intrinsically related (Huysmans 2006).

These insights are useful. Yet, by focusing almost exclusively on security professionals' networks, the Paris School potentially privileges the agency of an even smaller number of people than the CS. What is missing is sustained examination of the relationship between this "field" and its socio-political and economic context. Broader political, social and economic transformations, particularly contested changes in statehood, as well as the interests supporting or resisting the exercise of state power in various instances, powerfully shape the security field and the degree of autonomy enjoyed by professionals.

What we take from the CS and its constructivist and poststructuralist critics, therefore, is the notion that security is socially constructed; that it refers to, at least potentially, existential dangers; that securitization inherently empowers some actors at the expense of others; that discourse plays some role in defining security; and that networks of experts and officials are an important aspect of security governance. However, to fully understand the rise of NTS and its implications, our conception of securitization processes needs expanding to encompass broader historical and material processes of state transformation and we need to develop conceptual tools capable of analyzing security governance that go beyond security practitioners and their networks.

### **State Transformation and the Rescaling of Security**

The rise of NTS cannot be understood simply as a shift in discourse or security professionals' practices: it is part of a much broader, material transformation of states and the global political economy. The most salient feature of the politics of NTS is the struggle to alter the

scale at which particular issues are governed, from the national level to a variety of new spatial and territorial arenas, and to transform state apparatuses accordingly. This is because, typically, NTS issues are discursively presented as transnational in nature, meaning that traditional, nationally-based governance is now unfit for purpose and must be superseded by new instruments that match the scope of the threat. Such claims reflect (and further enable) the disaggregation of nation-statehood and the rise of regulatory and multilevel governance. This is a deep-seated, historical transformation of state institutions and activities, associated with changes in the global political economy since the 1970s. These changes have relativized the national scale: it no longer seems the most obvious or “natural” level at which issues should be governed. This relativization fuels and makes credible the claims associated with the NTS agenda.

To understand the practical politics of NTS, we must recognize that the claims made about NTS issues and the accompanying efforts to rescale governance – however “commonsensical” they may appear – are not uncontested. Different scales involve different configurations of actors, resources and political opportunities, always privileging some actors, interests and ideologies over others. Consequently, while some socio-political coalitions promote rescaling, others will resist it. The inter-scalar conflict between these coalitions – whose composition and relative power are also shaped by material processes – is what determines how NTS issues are identified and governed in practice.

### *The Centrality of Scale in the Politics of NTS*

There is one crucial way in which so-called NTS issues differ conceptually from traditional security issues, which is missed by the approaches considered above: they are typically viewed as transnational, or at least potentially so. Their perceived transnational character underpins the oft-repeated claim that their effective management requires moving beyond the

political and practical constraints of national governance. For example, Dupont (2001:8) argues that

deforestation results not only in the loss of a valuable resource for a local community or particular state. It can also trigger catastrophic flooding across national borders and contribute to widespread pollution and climate change that, in turn, may cause food shortages, population displacement, economic damage and death.

Such framing of NTS issues intrinsically raises questions of *scale*: they posit that threats have expanded in scope, beyond the national level, and urge commensurate shifts in governance to manage the problem. This *rescaling* of NTS issues – the scope of the threat, its referent object, and its governance – is the most crucial aspect of their securitization. Indeed, their relocation beyond the national scale, though not necessarily altogether out of the hands of state actors, partly *constitutes* their securitization, while the discourse of threat helps rationalize the rescaling of governance to other levels. This does not simply mean shifting the issue into regional inter-governmental forums, for example, but can involve *the rescaling of particular state apparatuses themselves* by inserting them into or making them answerable to international or transnational governance systems. This process is always contested, involving subjective, political strategies, rather than simply being a rational response to an objective threat environment, because different scales privilege different interests and ideologies. The politics of NTS thus involves different coalitions of actors struggling to define the nature of the problem and the appropriate scale at which it should be governed. The process may involve discursive strategies but is not limited simply to (indeed, may not even involve) demanding exceptional measures and, to yield real-world effects, also involves going beyond discourse to materially produce new governance arrangements or rescale existing ones. Below, we begin to elaborate the centrality of scale and rescaling to NTS by considering the relationship between space (or scale) and political rule in general, and to processes of state-transformation specifically.

One of critical political geography's chief insights has been that space and society are mutually constituted. Power relationships run through the construction of space and, in turn, the spatial organization of political and economic governance helps (re)produce particular power relations in society (Harvey 2006). For example, at the most basic level, the extent of the territory over which a state exercises sovereignty has enormous repercussions for the number of people sharing particular identities, the type and amount of natural resources available, the size of internal markets, the number of political actors with citizenship rights and the extent of their networks, and so on. Consequently, "the extensiveness of a territory can play a crucial role in determining the balance of power among competing territorial groups and institutions" (Miller 2009:54). This point is often overlooked by IR scholars – including many wideners-deepeners in security studies – who typically take the territorial configuration of "nation-states" for granted, ignoring the contested processes through which these configurations have historically been created and transformed (Agnew 1994).

One result of this confinement within the "territorial trap" is a neglect of territorial politics as a crucial aspect of social and political struggle. Societal and state actors seek to manipulate space and its political consequences by adopting "territorial strategies... mobilizing state institutions to shape and reshape inherited territorial structurations of political-economic life, including those of state institutions themselves" (Brenner and Elden 2009:368). These strategies are constrained by existing institutional arrangements, including established international borders, national sovereignty, and international law, which in themselves are manifestations of earlier contested processes of territorialization (see Tilly 1992). Yet, to the extent that they transform the spatial configuration of political and economic rule, they can have profound consequences.

This becomes particularly clear when considering the issue of scale. Whether a political issue is defined as urban/local, provincial, national, regional, global, and so on, is not



neutral but, because each scale involves different configurations of actors, resources and political opportunity structures, always privileges certain societal interests and values over others. Together with the nature of the coalitions which organize around various scalar framings, it is one of the most important factors that determine the outcome of social and political conflicts over a given issue. Precisely because the scale of governance matters so much, actors will typically attempt to rescale issues as a way of (re)producing particular power relations favorable to themselves and their allies, while other actors and coalitions will resist such efforts if they are deleterious to them (see Gibson 2005). The strategy of “scale jumping” – shifting political contestation to a different scale to bring in new actors and resources – has been used by movements as disparate as the Zapatistas, labor unions, indigenous peoples’ organizations, feminists, environmentalists and living wage campaigners (Leitner and Sheppard 2009:233). Although the study of territorial politics typically focuses on domestic political struggles, there is no reason why the governance of particular issues cannot be rescaled to levels beyond state borders: there is no “initial moment that creates a framework or container within which future struggles are played out” (Brenner and Elden 2009:367). The presentation of NTS issues as “transnational” is itself to insist on governing them outside of national frameworks, although not necessarily by non-state actors.

For example, emphasizing the potential spill-over of NTS problems to Australia from nearby “failing” states has been the mechanism through which the Australian government has rescaled – “regionalized” – Australian domestic security. Australian national security no longer simply means protecting Australia’s shores from aggressors, but also ensuring the effectiveness of the governing institutions and processes of neighboring countries. One manifestation of this shift has been the transnationalization of agencies like the Australian Federal Police (AFP), previously a domestic law-enforcement agency. The AFP is now tasked with new roles such as building regional counterparts’ capacity or even active offshore

policing (Hameiri 2009). This example reveals that the rescaling processes associated with NTS involve not merely rescaling particular issues but also the apparatuses tasked to deal with them, in the intervened *and* intervening countries. From this perspective, the politics of NTS differs radically from that of traditional security. Securitizing NTS issues does not simply add to a list of security concerns for states whose fundamental nature remains unchanged. Rather, by virtue of their transnational nature, the securitization of NTS issues is part of a process of state transformation.

Understanding how and why such transformation occurs is easier if we understand the state not merely as a set of institutions, agencies and actors, but primarily as a social relation and expression of power (Poulantzas 1978; Jessop 1990). State power is a set of complex and dynamic social and political relationships that shape the use of the state apparatus. Conflict among historically specific coalitions of social and political forces rooted primarily in the political economy – classes, class fractions, distributional coalitions and other societal groups – is consequently crucial for understanding why particular state forms and institutions emerge, and explaining the way they function. To analyze how and why issues are identified and governed as NTS issues thus involves identifying the conflicts between the different contending coalitions that organize around them, both within and beyond the state, and drive or resist processes of state transformation. The actual governance regimes which emerge in practice can be understood as a contingent outcome of these struggles. To understand why the governance of NTS is fought out transnationally today, however, it is important to situate these conflicts within a historically-specific process of state transformation associated with recent changes in the global political economy.

*Why Now? NTS and the Emergence of the Regulatory State*

We reject the empiricist claim that the rise of NTS is simply a reflection of changes in the threat environment associated with globalization. Although some material circumstances have changed, many “new” threats are, as noted earlier, not new at all. What is new is the rescaling of governance associated with the (partial and uneven) dismantling of the Keynesian-welfare state of the postwar period in the West, and later with associated transformation processes occurring elsewhere. These changes have given rise to a relativization of scale, new spatial imaginaries and forms of disaggregated regulatory statehood that prompt and enable the rescaling of security governance.

In the decades immediately following World War II, the national scale of governance was extremely dominant. The Bretton Woods Keynesian-Fordist economic settlement affirmed the primacy of national money over international currency and established the individual and social wage as the basis of domestic demand. These priorities “were reflected in the primacy of national economies, national welfare states, and national societies managed by national states concerned to unify national territories” (Jessop 2009:99). At the international level, this was reflected by a strong determination to uphold state sovereignty and existing territorial borders, including those bequeathed to post-colonial states (Barkin and Cronin 1994), and by an understanding of international security as being fundamentally inter-state in nature. However, the 1970s crisis of Western capitalism, marked by declining profit rates and stagflation, led to the de-emphasis and dismantling of key elements of postwar national governance. The demise of the gold standard in 1971 was followed by rapid economic liberalization, cemented by the elections of the Reagan and Thatcher administrations. Neoliberal reforms designed to break the power of organized labor – which relied on national bargaining – involved opening up national economies to international competition. These reforms were championed by fractions of large-scale merchant and

finance capital, which pushed for the creation of new, global scales of capital accumulation (Harvey 2005).

These developments have “relativized” the national scale of governance: it no longer has a “taken-for-granted” quality as the best level at which political, economic or security issues should be governed. However, no other scale – whether local, regional or global – “has acquired a similar dominance. Instead, different economic and political spaces and forces located at different scales are competing to become the primary or nodal point of accumulation and/or state power. The relativization of scale also offers important new opportunities for scale jumping and struggles over interscalar articulation” (Jessop 2009:99). It is in this context that many scholars have observed the emergence of new forms of networked and multilevel governance, particularly in Europe. These new arrangements do not simply denote the withering away of the state but rather the relativization of the national scale and the emergence of disaggregated and regulatory forms of sovereign statehood. Central states are increasingly limited to “meta-governance,” overseeing a diverse range of private and public regulatory actors operating at multiple scales (Sassen 2006; Jessop 2009; Abrahamsen and Williams 2011). This affords considerable latitude for subnational agencies to construct new, multi-scalar governance arrangements including institutions and actors beyond national borders. For example, Ali and Keil (2009) show how the disaggregation of public health governance to local/municipal authorities in Canada under neoliberal reform processes, coupled with the identification of epidemic diseases as a transnational phenomenon, led to the City of Toronto devising new governance measures with the WHO during the 2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome outbreak, completely bypassing the central Canadian state.

These transformations are not simply natural or rational responses to changing circumstances but reflect the uneven and contested processes by which the nationally based

class compromises which underpinned Keynesian national-welfare states were attacked and undermined. As part of these processes, government's function has been redefined from securing a political accommodation between competing domestic interests to facilitating market-led development, providing regulation, and managing risk. The diffusion of authority to a multitude of governance actors, often operating outside the official boundaries of government, has played a crucial part in limiting the range of issues contested through the institutions of representative democracy, and has given considerable power to unelected experts – public and private – to define and govern particular issues (Swyngedouw 2005). These actors are now often part of complex governance structures involving governmental, intergovernmental and non-state actors that simultaneously operate across several scales. The result has been to weaken the power of organizations, such as trade unions, whose power depends upon national political and legal institutions (see Lillie 2010).

Though the shift to regulatory statehood has originated, and been more pronounced, in Western Europe, North America, and Australasia, similar processes have been taking place to varying degrees elsewhere, including in East Asia – typically seen as a region of “strong” states, jealously guarding their sovereignty. There, state transformation has generally not been driven by efforts to undermine organized labor, whose weakness is a Cold War legacy. Rather it is related to the transnationalization and regionalization of production networks and investment driven by firms from outside the region and by East Asian state and state-linked capitalist interests. It has also been promoted by the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis and the associated crisis of the developmental state project, as well as by the need to accommodate demands for political responsiveness from new groups emerging through decades of sustained economic growth (Jayasuriya 2005; Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007). In Africa and the Southwest Pacific, where most so-called “fragile” states are located, state transformation processes have partly been facilitated by externally-imposed structural adjustment programs,

and Western state-building interventions designed to manage the external risks perceived to arise from social and political instability there (Hameiri 2010).

The politics of NTS is a specific manifestation of these processes of state transformation. The framing of NTS issues as transnational in nature and requiring governance systems which map onto these problems reflects the relativization of scale, with the national level no longer being seen as the most appropriate one at which to manage collective problems. The securitization of ostensibly transnational issues is further prompted and legitimized by the emergence of new “spatial imaginaries,” through which political thought and identities are recast. Partly as a result of the creation of global market forces, capitalist interests and state managers encourage citizens to perceive and adjust their social and economic life in the context of global economic competition, creating a strong sense of a planetary scale on which economic flows now operate. This is reinforced by journalistic presentation of the world as “flat” and by academic discourse around “globalization.” State managers experimenting with transnationalized forms of governance promote new regional imaginaries to cultivate popular legitimacy for their projects, such as a “European” identity or an “ASEAN community.” Environmentalist NGOs construct “bioregions” that cut across domestic jurisdictions, encouraging us to imagine ourselves as part of regional or global ecosystems. Urban political elites and finance capital promote imaginaries of “global cities,” more connected to far-flung urban centers than their own hinterlands. The profusion of such post-national spatial imaginaries, coupled with the contemporary emphasis on risk, creates a far broader subjective sense of interconnectedness across space and of greater vulnerability to far-away developments, while implicitly or explicitly depicting nationally-based governance as fundamentally inadequate for the challenges we face. This facilitates the identification of NTS issues as being intrinsically transnational in nature and thus requiring rescaled forms of governance. Yet, these imaginaries’ discourse suggests, there is an intrinsically normative

element to the promotion of, or resistance to, rescaling, since different scalar arrangements always enable or constrain different socio-political and economic projects.

However, like the process of state transformation itself, the securitization (or not) of particular issues is ultimately determined by struggles between the coalitions that organize around the issues concerned. Sometimes, securitization processes relate directly to imperatives of capitalist accumulation and are therefore bound up in conflicts between different fractions of capital, as in the case study on environmental security governance below. At other times, as in the AFP example above, the rescaling of governance may be shaped by overarching political imperatives in a regulatory state context, such as the need to reproduce political legitimacy (Purcell and Nevins 2005), primarily by demonstrating a capacity to manage the various NTS challenges associated with globalization (see Mabee 2009). Specific forms of scientific and technical expertise often play a key role in the discursive construction and governance of NTS issues like cyber-crime and infectious disease (Hansen and Nissenbaum 2009; Elbe 2010). Tackling such issues has become politically important in the context of the spatial imaginary of a “world risk society” (Beck 1999). With the demise of class struggle as the animating force of politics, political elites also increasingly seek to mobilize support through appealing to and seeking to manage the widespread fear and insecurity accompanying the more precarious and individuated nature of contemporary social and economic life (Furedi 2005).

Having outlined the historical processes and socio-political struggles involved in the securitization and governance of NTS, we can now illustrate our argument through a case study.

### **The Rescaling of Security and Southeast Asia's Haze Problem**

Southeast Asia provides a “hard case” for our approach. The national scale of governance was a crucial locus for powerful forces during the Cold War, which built robust states and insisted on “non-interference” in their “internal” affairs in order to maintain non-communist order. Subsequently, many scholars argue, the “naked pursuit of Westphalian sovereignty epitomize[s] the essence of Asian security” (Moon and Chun 2003:107). However, this case study of efforts to govern emissions from forest fires (“haze”) as a regional NTS issue problematizes such judgments. Some forces have clearly attempted to construct a post-Westphalian form of multilevel governance, rescaling parts of the Indonesian state apparatus to serve regional agendas and empowering experts to overcome nationally- and locally-based resistance. Yet, powerful opponents operating at the local and national scales have limited the degree of rescaling the practical operation of state and regional apparatuses. Consequently, despite the discursive securitization of haze, which mainstream approaches would expect to generate “emergency” responses, its governance remains considerably constrained. The case thus clearly demonstrates the centrality of the contestation of scale and state transformation to the politics of NTS.

Each year, illegal Indonesian forest and land fires produce a thick smog that blankets large parts of Southeast Asia, particularly Singapore and Malaysia. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has identified this “haze” as a major transnational security threat (ASEAN 2006). While the fires themselves threaten lives, homes and livelihoods, the haze is also framed as a threat: to citizens’ health; to the regional economy, by damaging tourism, trade and investment; and to wider international society by contributing to global warming (ASEAN 2007:4). This discursive securitization reflects the costs of the haze and growing societal concern about the threats posed by environmental degradation, especially climate change. In 1997, one of the worst years, fires killed around 500 people, haze affected



the health of up to 70m people, and the total socio-economic and environmental cost was estimated at \$9.3bn (Qadri 2001:52, 54). The carbon released was estimated at 13 to 40 per cent of total *global* annual emissions from fossil fuels (Page et al. 2002). In 2011, Indonesia was ranked as the world's third-largest carbon dioxide emitter, forest and land fires comprising up to 85 per cent of its emissions. Particularly since haze was linked to climate change, the threat posed by haze is often presented in terms of *potential* dangers requiring forms of prevention and risk management. Doctors warn, for example, "that a generation of young children... may suffer permanent damage to their health" (*The Economist* 2000), while environmentalists insist on "united" action "because the potential dangers of climate change are too great to ignore" (World Bank 2007), and forestry experts caution that "the threat of future catastrophic fires looms large" (Dennis et al. 2005:498). However, as with other cases mentioned above, the discursive identification of a threat has been accompanied not by the emergency or extraordinary measures that Copenhagen scholars might anticipate, but by efforts to rescale governance to the regional level.

These efforts have been led by a loose coalition including the Singaporean, Malaysian and Indonesian environment ministries, Southeast Asian and Western environmental NGOs, and supportive international institutions including the Asian Development Bank, the ASEAN Secretariat, the UN Environment Program and Western governments' international development agencies. By 1999, 35 donor projects had been launched to strengthen expert knowledge and networks and to enhance the capacity of forestry institutions to monitor and manage fires in Indonesia. The country is also a major focus for donor projects under the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation initiative. Regionally, ASEAN concluded a Cooperation Plan on Transboundary Pollution in 1995, a Regional Haze Action Plan in 1997, an Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution in 2002, and the ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy in 2007. These agreements have tasked "national focal

points” to disseminate forestry and peatland governance standards crafted by regional experts and develop and/or coordinate domestic agencies to prevent and suppress forest fires. The ASEAN agreements thus established an internationally based regulatory framework, which set the agenda for national and sub-national regulatory and enforcement agencies, aspiring toward a complex form of multilevel governance.

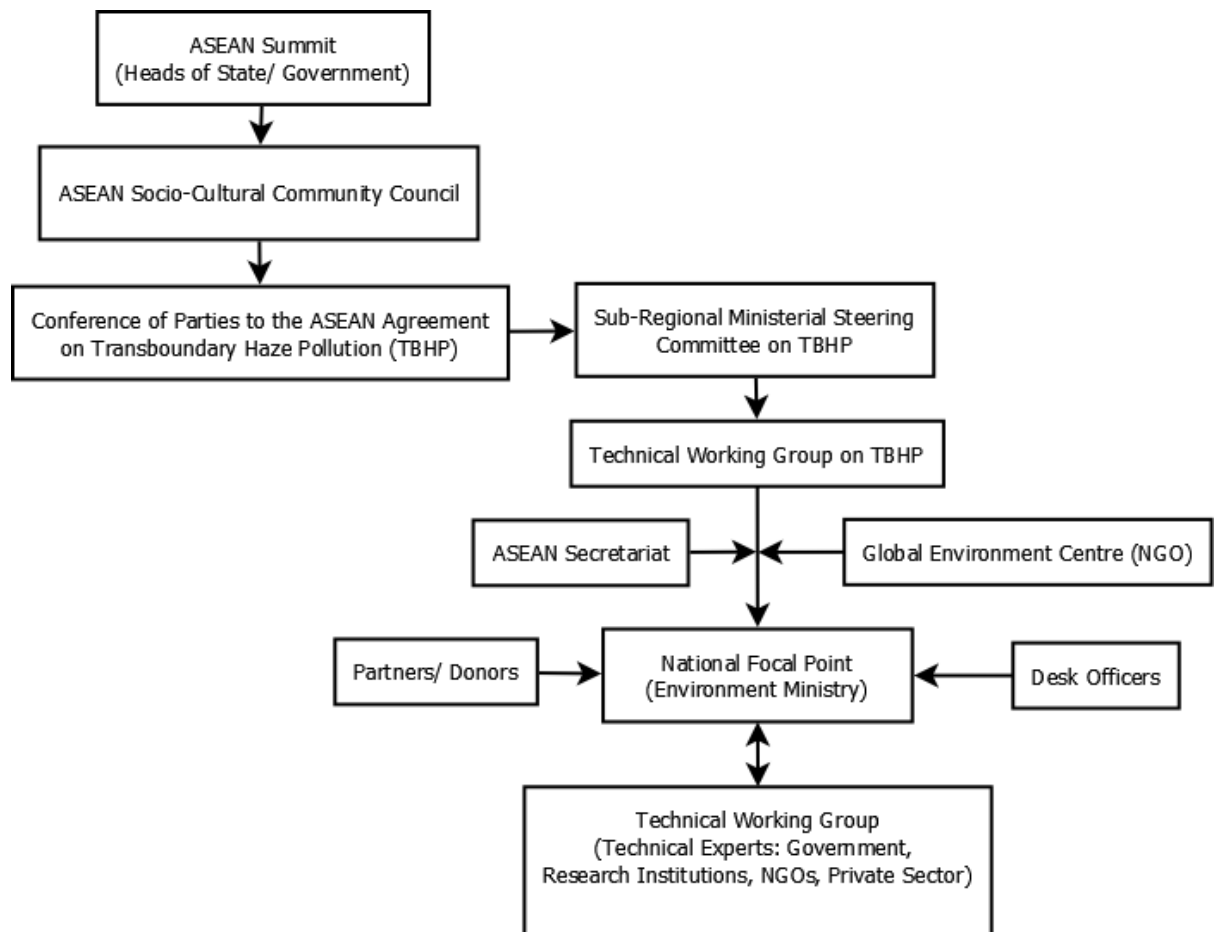


FIG 1. ASEAN Peatland Management System (source: ASEAN 2007:22-24)

This has permitted the rescaling of some elements of the Indonesian state. As the “focal point” of regional governance, the Environment Ministry has clearly been inserted into an international architecture. Although lacking line responsibility, meaning its influence on the ground is limited, it has played a key role in improving the national coordination of line ministries to tackle fire and haze and setting environmental management norms and targets

for sub-national agencies. The Ministry of Forestry (MoF) has also been partly internationalised, with staff from Britain's Department for International Development working within the ministry on forestry governance projects. The MoF has apparently used international attention and capacity-building assistance as part of its struggle to reassert its authority vis-à-vis local actors following the decentralisation of the Indonesian state in 1998, when the power to issue forestry permits was delegated to the district level. The MoF reclaimed this in 2001, but has since faced an uphill struggle to reassert its authority against *bupatis* (district chiefs). Foreign pressure and aid has enabled the MoF to strengthen its domestic surveillance capacities and create fire-fighting units stationed in 30 fire-prone districts. Intensified pressure from Jakarta has ostensibly corralled sub-national institutions into a fire control system seemingly extending from the international-regional to the village level.

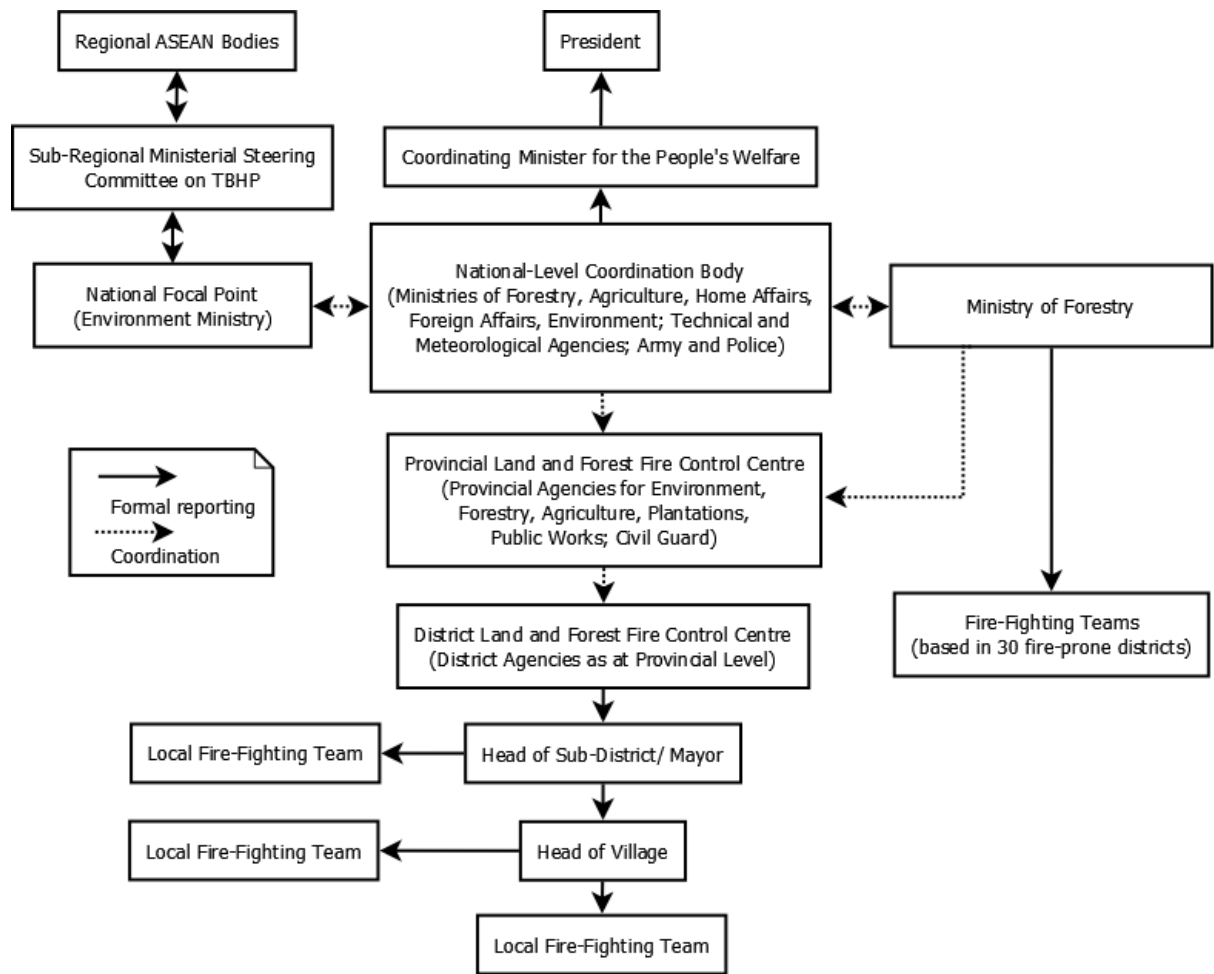


FIG 2. Indonesian Fire Control System (source: MoE 2011)

In addition to these formal structures, decentralization enabled Singapore to work directly with the Jambi provincial government to develop a Master Plan for the mitigation of fires, while Malaysia has engaged directly with several districts in Riau province (NEA 2009; DoE 2009). This also reflects the partial rescaling of the Malaysian and Singaporean ministries involved. Singapore's Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, for example, now projects itself at "global, regional and bilateral levels," since "today, environmental challenges... are global in scope and impact" (MEWR 2011).

At the regional level, the Singapore-based ASEAN Specialized Meteorological Centre performs a regional surveillance function, uses satellite data to provide daily updates on "hotspots" which are used by regional governments to pressurize national and/or subnational agencies within Indonesia to suppress fires. This surveillance system has been enhanced

along risk-management lines, in an attempt to prevent fires escalating out of control and to bypass Indonesian resistance to accepting external help during major haze episodes. Since 2005, when hotspots exceed a particular threshold, an ASEAN Panel of Experts on Fire and Haze is automatically deployed to at-risk areas to provide “rapid independent assessment and recommendation for the mobilization of resources during impending critical periods” (ASEAN 2010). The Indonesian government is now internationally accountable for its performance. Its progress against a regionally approved 2006 Plan of Action is regularly monitored at Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee meetings using “key performance indicators” (MoF n.d.).

The securitization and governance of haze therefore reflects many of the dynamics of the politics of NTS identified earlier, notably those associated with managing potential dangers and rescaling. Haze is increasingly seen as a risk to health, economic prosperity and human security, particularly as it is linked with climate change. The scope of an issue once treated as a domestic problem has been expanded into a regional and even global one, while its governance involves the rescaling and transformation of state apparatuses. This governance increasingly encompasses diverse technical, expert and non-governmental bodies operating at multiple levels, alongside state officials. However, understanding how these *formal* governance arrangements operate in practice requires that we consider the resistance of a countervailing coalition of actors with strong interests in restricting environmental governance to a local/national level.

Key among these are agro-industrial businesses, politicians and officials who benefit from the fires, which are principally used to clear land cheaply to establish agricultural plantations. Indonesia’s natural resources have been a key patronage resource for ruling elites since independence, and under Suharto a vast network of state-linked crony capitalists plundered the forests at will. The 1997 fires were predominantly caused by their

conglomerates systematically burning degraded forests and peatland to establish palm oil plantations (Dauvergne 1998). These agri-business interests remain deeply entrenched within the state system at all levels due to extensive corruption and collusion with officials and political elites. Indeed, decentralization has radically multiplied the opportunities for such relationships, with *bupatis* exchanging plantation licenses – control over which remains decentralized – to obtain kickbacks and political support (Smith et al. 2003). Large-scale, nationally licensed companies are now subject to internationalized surveillance and more robust regulation which, coupled with the threat of losing access to Western export markets and NGO pressures through bodies like the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and the Forestry Stewardship Council, have ostensibly forced many of them to adopt zero-burning policies. However, smaller firms which obtain local licenses corruptly are frequently protected by their patrons and free to burn land with impunity, beyond the reach of national or provincial agencies. Indonesia's law-enforcement services have also long been involved in such illegal activities, assisting powerful agri-business magnates to ignore regulations and corrupt judicial processes (International Crisis Group 2001; Matthew and van Gelder 2002). These forces naturally wish to preserve a local-national scale for environmental governance since at this level their interests prevail. By increasing surveillance and bringing in new actors, securitizing and regionalizing forestry governance directly threatens their primitive accumulation strategies and their ability to subvert domestic governance.

Local politico-business elites constrain rescaling or the efficacy of rescaled institutions in several ways. One is simply to withhold cooperation or to deflect it in a non-threatening direction. For example, when Singaporean officials and their partners deployed in Jambi, the *bupati* denied them access to locally licensed plantations, diverting them instead to nationally licensed ones, thereby protecting his corporate allies. Another approach is to systematically under-fund the local state apparatuses that are part of the regionalised fire

control system. For example, in the most fire-prone area of Jambi province there are just 15 trained fire-fighters, with an annual budget of \$22,000, to cover a total area of 646,000 hectares. In practice the districts rely almost entirely on the fire-fighting units of the MoF or nationally-licensed firms, though a Singaporean-sponsored review revealed the latter did not meet legal requirements while the former actually spend most of their time fighting fires on palm oil plantations (Sanders 2012).

This also illustrates the way in which local state-business nexuses mould the operation of rescaled state apparatuses to suit themselves. This includes regional institutions. For instance, when the ASEAN Panel of Experts deployed to Kalimantan in 2008, they discovered that 1,000 hectares of land were being burned to establish a rice plantation. The local government possessed the capacities to extinguish the fires, but was deliberately withholding them to assist the company involved. The provincial governor also tried to prevent fire governance being scaled upwards, urging the Panel not to recommend the deployment of national or international fire-fighting forces. It instead insisted on local capacities being used, but the fire was apparently not tackled until the burning had been completed (Zurkarnain 2012). On other occasions, the Panel's reports have been doctored under pressure from government officials keen to protect their institutional failures from external scrutiny. As one academic expert on the Panel observes, "the real experts, we will say everything true, based on scientific knowledge. But sometimes this information is not so good for politicians or officials" who instead demand "a compromise statement" (Saharjo 2011).

Finally, efforts to tackle fire and haze are deflected towards smallholders and local communities, who lack powerful political backers. Local environmental agencies concentrate on "educating" villagers about the dangers of using fire, which is as patronising as it is ineffective, since poor farmers cannot, unlike companies, afford zero-burning land-clearing

technologies. Less benign is the tendency of police forces to select these easy targets: while poor villagers are frequently prosecuted, only two plantation managers have ever been put on trial. As one local forestry official comments, “it’s easy for companies to avoid prosecution; but if we treated companies strictly... it would endanger the business climate in Indonesia. That’s why the government doesn’t enforce the law strongly” (Tanpidau 2011).

Importantly, however, resistance to rescaling is not confined to the local level. National agencies like the MoF embrace rescaling to the extent it strengthens their hand against local authorities, but resist fully internationalizing the issue, citing Singaporean and Malaysian non-cooperation in areas like the smuggling of illegal timber, the felling of which is said to increase forests’ vulnerability to fire. This has emboldened national legislators – some of whom are linked to agri-business interests or whose parties rely on “donations” funneled upwards from the districts – to refuse to ratify the ASEAN Haze Agreement. Legislators have rejected ASEAN agreements as containing no “balance of benefits,” asserting that “we do not need to be afraid of pressures from other countries” (*Straits Times* 2006). Although significant rescaling has occurred regardless, this resistance has ultimately circumscribed it, preventing haze receiving maximal attention and resources and enabling government agencies and others to respond to international pressure by saying “we are not obliged” to cooperate (ASEAN Official 2011). This illustrates how national states may retain an important role as “scale managers,” despite the relativization of scale (Mahon and Keil 2009). This resistance is frequently couched in a nationalist-developmental ideological discourse, attracting support from a wider constituency. The palm oil industry is a huge export earner, garnering \$16.4bn in 2010, 2.3 percent of Indonesia’s GDP. Citing significant smallholder participation, the government aims to double output from 2011-2020 as part of its poverty alleviation strategy. External criticism of the sector’s environmental record is often depicted as a virtual conspiracy to retard Indonesia’s development.



Finally, notwithstanding the opportunism of some nationalist responses, constraints on the rescaling of governance clearly emanate from the regional and global political economy. Although the haze is frequently blamed solely on Indonesia, natural resource exploitation and associated environmental degradation and pollution is clearly driven by international consumer demand for forestry and agricultural products, and by the practices of foreign companies, including those headquartered in Singapore and Malaysia. Malaysia's timber-processing industry apparently relies on smuggled timber, including from Indonesia, for nearly three-quarters of its input, while Singaporean-based firms like Asia-Pacific Resources International Ltd (APRIL) and Asia Pulp and Paper also operate vast mills in Indonesia which NGOs accuse of using illegally-felled timber (Nguitragool 2011:92; Jikalahari 2008). The expansion of palm oil in Indonesia has also been powerfully driven by Malaysian firms due to the exhaustion of land supplies in Malaysia, and they are regularly accused of using fire (FoE 2008).

The influence of such interests in Malaysia and Singapore, where corporate power is also intertwined with state structures, has doubtless constrained how far these governments will push for the rescaling of environmental security governance or forcefully intervene to suppress illegal activities. They reject, for instance, suggestions to regulate their transnational corporations' overseas activities. Major agribusinesses, including APRIL and Sinar Mas, were actually directly involved in Singapore's governance projects in Indonesia (NEA 2009: 11, 23, 16-17). Their presence arguably helped limit the project's objectives to establishing surveillance mechanisms and educating small-scale farmers in zero-burn techniques, rather than creating enforcement mechanisms capable of taking on the powerful corporate interests that generate most of the fires. This reminds us that a full explanation of transboundary security issues is rarely complete without taking into account the complex and evolving organization of economic, social and political power within and beyond the state.

## Conclusion

Non-traditional security problems have become increasingly important to policymakers, practitioners and scholars in recent times. Existing critical approaches in security studies, which aim to explain the politics of securitization, are incapable of understanding the drivers of this apparent trend and its various dimensions because of their neglect of the relationship between securitization and broader processes of social, economic and political change, and state transformation in particular. While agreeing that security is inherently socially constructed, political and contested, we argue that explanations cannot be found solely in security's discourses. Drawing on insights from political geography and state theory, we claim that the observed shift within security needs to be conceptualized in terms of a deep-seated historical transformation in the scale of the state's institutions and activities. Struggles over the meaning of security and its governance between competing coalitions are part of broader conflicts over the organization of political rule across both institutional and geographical spaces. The haze case study revealed that the inherently conflict-ridden processes of securitization-rescaling and resistance to it generate highly uneven outcomes. This focus on structural constraints and the ideologies and interests of historically specific coalitions of agents provides a way of explaining variation in the governance of security issues across space and time.

Our goal has been to help understand the historically-specific rise of NTS issues and to explain the governance systems emerging to manage them by situating the phenomenon of "securitization" within a broader social and political context. Clearly, however, much more research is required to refine this framework and its deployment. More work is also needed to delineate the normative implications of security's rescaling. Generally speaking, the shifting of governance into spaces beyond the national level involves removing them from democratic control, since these spaces may be dominated by technocrats or technical experts and are

generally beyond the reach of representative institutions. As we have shown, there is no scale at which it is “natural” or “best” to govern a given issue; rather, particular scales privilege the interests, ideologies and agendas of particular forces, and any given arrangement must be normatively evaluated in that light.

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